

blue-collar labor force. However, no fascist movement became a major political party without having mobilized the class of small property owners. This suggests that an essential ingredient in fascist success was the support of small property owners. Where fascist parties failed in their efforts to mobilize these small property owners, fascist parties never built a national and mass-based following.

If mobilization of small property owners was so important to fascist success, why didn't all fascist parties pursue the effort? Although all fascist parties tried to win over the small property owners, many failed because they were unable to develop and disseminate a coherent program addressing the material interests of small property holders and/or the fascist parties found the path to mobilizing the class of small property owners blocked by other political parties perceived by this class to be the defenders of their interests. Interestingly, the political left played a crucial role in determining the outcome of fascist mobilization efforts. That is, where the left abandoned small property holders by taking a maximalist stand on defense of small property, an opening occurred for another party to defend small property rights (e.g., fascist parties). Whereas the left took up defense of small property, new parties could not establish a foothold. Only in France did the left erect a solid barricade against fascism's efforts to build a popular movement among small property owners. The left in Germany, Italy, and Belgium failed to fashion a program that addressed the material interests of a large part of the class of small property holders. In particular, the left in Germany, Italy, and Belgium never saw fit to abandon a call for land collectivization and public ownership of the means of production, whereas the left in France supported land redistribution and private property. As a result, millions of small property owners in Germany, Italy, and Belgium who might have been attracted by the left's attack on large property and leftist pleas for greater social equality abhorred the left's rejection of private property. In short, in those countries where the political left failed to mobilize the class of small property owners, fascist parties succeeded in attracting a sizable popular following.

Fascism is global or transnational in that, as an ideology, it embodied a fervent nationalism, a classless society, a repudiation of the conventional elites, and hostility to traditional capitalism and Marxism. Fascist movements and parties, however,

varied significantly in terms of their ability to attract popular support and to gain political power. Fascism's popular appeal in Italy, Belgium, and Germany can be largely attributed to the failure of the political left (as well as other competing parties) to address the interests of small property holders. Fascism is not only a transnational phenomenon but also a temporal phenomenon that resulted from a unique constellation of events, including the fear of a spreading bolshevism, dismay with liberal capitalism, the rise of new nation-states, and massive economic dislocation between World War I and World War II.

William I. Brustein

*See also* Charismatic Leaders; Community; Economic Crises; Ideologies, Global; Modernization; National Identities; Nationalism, Neo-Nationalism; Racial Identity; Racial Supremacy; Socialism; Wars, World

### Further Readings

- Brustein, W. (1991). The "red menace" and the rise of Italian fascism. *American Sociological Review*, 56, 652-664.
- Brustein, W. (1996). *The logic of evil: The social origins of the Nazi Party, 1925-1933*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Brustein, W., & Berntson, M. (1999). Interwar fascist popularity in Europe and the default of the left. *European Sociological Review*, 15, 25-44.
- Eatwell, R. (2001). Universal fascism? Approaches and definitions. In S. U. Larsen (Ed.), *Fascism outside Europe: The European impulse against domestic conditions in the diffusion of global fascism* (pp. 15-45). Boulder, CO: Social Science Monographs.
- Linz, J. (1976). Some notes toward a comparative study of fascism in sociological historical perspective. In W. Laqueur (Ed.), *Fascism: A reader's guide* (pp. 3-121). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Payne, S. (1980). *Fascism: Definition and comparison*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

---

## FEMINISM

---

Feminism became a global movement in the 20th century, although the end of the 19th century marked the beginning of the spreading of feminism

as a movement worldwide. The first international congress to use the word *feminist* in its title took place in Paris in 1892. From its outset, feminism was more a Western phenomenon, and the links between feminists in Europe and North America were crucial for its diffusion. Feminism is defined in several dictionaries as a doctrine that aims to improve the position of women. If equality of the sexes is central to this objective, attempts to categorize feminism must take into account the idea that it embraces both equality and difference.

Over time there have been various isolated acts of feminism, of which two examples are Christine de Pizan's 1405 work *La cité des dames* and Olympe de Gouges' *Déclaration des droits de la femme et de la citoyenne* (1791). However, it is only in the late 19th century that an organized feminist movement emerged. From the outset, and due to the different forms it has taken, it is more accurate to describe it as "feminisms" to indicate the varieties of feminisms and the fact many feminisms can be identified.

The majority of feminists used lobbying strategies in their attempts to secure reforms. Their demands were characterized by cross-national activities that would today be called a transnational strategy. Consequently, since the earliest days feminisms were intrinsically transnational, organizing themselves in transnational associations with intercontinental dimensions.

This entry on feminism focuses on the multiple connections existing between feminists across the world and illuminates the transnational aspects of their cooperation. It analyzes the diversities and complexities of feminisms in the world and shows the pertinence of speaking of feminisms in relation to globalization. Writing about feminisms is not describing a linear process; on the contrary, this entry shows the advances and reversals where no right is permanently acquired. Despite this nonlinearity, it is important to delineate a chronology that can clarify the general framework.

### The Emergence of Feminisms

Born during the last decade of the 19th century, the golden age of feminisms was reached prior to the outbreak of World War I in 1914. During the war, feminists' priorities concentrated on serving their countries, and they generally suspended their

claims in the context of exacerbated patriotism and nationalism hoping that after the war was over they would be rewarded with the granting of rights—particularly the right to vote. Although this did happen in the United Kingdom (1918), Germany (1919), and the United States (1920), many countries continued to deny women the franchise for many years. The vote was not extended to include women until 1931 in Spain, 1932 in Brazil, 1944 in France, 1945 in Italy, 1946 in Japan, 1947 in Argentina, 1948 in Belgium, 1949 in Chile, 1952 in Greece and India, 1953 in Mexico, 1955 in Egypt, 1971 in Switzerland, and 1974 in Portugal. Finland, Norway, and Denmark, on the other hand, enfranchised women in 1906, 1913, and 1915, respectively.

Depending on their national contexts, feminisms had different priorities. Feminists' demands were, and continue to be, powerfully affected by the varying national contexts. If obtaining the right to vote for women was the main objective in many European countries and the United States at the beginning, it was viewed as a means by which to obtain other rights, among which the right to education was fundamental. The right to have access to work was also one of the movement's main demands, and feminists sought to alter existing national legislations through the lobbying of politicians and asking for changes to many articles in the various civil codes (a number of them influenced by the Napoleonic civil code of 1804).

Feminisms must not be merged with women's movements that encompass a broader designation: Not all women's associations are necessarily feminist. Those who are active within feminisms also must not also be mistaken for all women: Feminists were and remain a minority. They are generally drawn from an urban elite that has the financial resources needed to travel, with those from the developing world often being educated abroad. Consequently, feminists have been criticized as being "bourgeois," and the pejorative sense of that word has been used in an effort to discredit them. Feminisms caused antifeminisms, which have various forms and emerged in response to feminists' demands. Antifeminisms are widespread in both space and time.

The metaphor of the wave has been used extensively to characterize feminists' activities. The first wave relates to the initial period of feminisms, and

the second wave emerged during the late 1960s. More recently, there has been a debate on the usefulness of the wave metaphor for capturing the complexities of feminisms. This discussion seeks to challenge this metaphor and replace it with others, such as a geological one with eruptions and flows, or radio waves with their many frequencies.

To better understand feminisms today, it is important to know their history. As already noted, this will depend largely on the national contexts for the period being studied, for example, the links between the abolition of slavery movement at the beginnings of U.S. feminisms, or the importance of the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, the aim of which was “to discuss the social, civil and religious condition and rights of women.”

### Feminisms in the 20th Century

After women in some countries had won the right to vote during the 1920s, the Great Depression of the 1930s forced them to return to the home. During this period of high unemployment, women were accused of taking the jobs from men. The interwar period was marked by the rise of fascism in many countries, and in the consequent hostile environment feminists were faced with limited margin for maneuver. With the outbreak of World War II in 1939, men were obliged to fight and women took over their jobs. After the war had ended, the men returned and the women were expected to return to the home and take responsibility for their “domestic obligations.”

Feminists were constantly caught between their duties and their rights. First wave feminists emphasized the need for a balance between the two, but it was a very fragile one that depended on the economic and political situation. In short, the Great Depression of the 1930s, followed by the rise of totalitarian states and World War II, signaled the end of first wave feminist movements.

The 1940s were years of enforced domesticity, and during the 1950s duties prevailed and women were expected to get married and take care of their families. Of course it did not mean feminists ceased being active, and some were involved in the movements that brought an end to British colonialism in Egypt and India. Second wave feminisms emerged in a context of decolonization, with feminists taking part in anticolonial struggles.

For the second wave feminisms of the 1960s, access to the contraceptive pill made the sexual revolution possible. One characteristic of this second wave feminist movement was its focus on women's sexuality. Meanwhile, for the majority of first wave feminists, sexuality, birth control, and abortion were taboo—although these issues became essential feminist demands during the 1960s and 1970s. *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, published in 1970 by the Boston Women's Health Book Collective, provided an overview of women's sexuality.

Landmark books by women writers, such as Simone de Beauvoir's 1949 work *The Second Sex*, Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), and Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* (1970), books that theorized women's oppression, were important for feminists of the second wave. Beauvoir's comment “*On ne naît pas femme, on le devient*” (“One is not born a woman, one becomes one”) emphasizes the importance played by the cultural environment, while Friedan focuses on women's rights and Millett denounces patriarchy. Of course, the so-called oppression of women has different roots and encompasses many variables. A common pattern for feminisms around the world is that women writers have been at the forefront of global feminist activism. From Latin American activists to the southern European feminist writers (e.g., the three Marias in Portugal), in a world of globalization, diaspora activism is fundamental.

The 1970s were marked by the first United Nations (UN) conference on women. Taking place in Mexico in 1975, it inaugurated a new phase in transnational feminisms by virtue of its unprecedented scale. During the 1980s and 1990s, there was a proliferation of nongovernmental organizations in the orbit of the United Nations. Various networks were formed, with the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 being an oft-mentioned event. Important key UN texts, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979, were fundamental for transnational feminist activism. The main topics discussed were violence against women (which includes domestic violence), prostitution, rape, female circumcision, and sexual rights; specific matters included the dowry in India. Global feminisms, while recognizing transnational differences, emphasize the importance of a common denominator and

the need for cooperation between the different feminist groups and organizations.

### Recent Developments

The importance of these transnational campaigns as attempts to achieve changes at the international and national levels demonstrates the globalization of feminism, even while it has been subjected to a backlash since the 1980s. Indeed, there has been a reaction against the “global sisterhood” that emerged in transnational networks. *Sisterhood Is Global* is the title of Robin Morgan’s 1984 anthology focusing on strategies for worldwide feminist solidarity.

Another important issue discussed by feminists throughout the world is the disparity between professional opportunities for men and women. Women are paid less than men for doing the same work (the gender gap between pay for comparable work is around 30%). Russian and Chinese women were removed from the workplace following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and in this context feminists insisted on the right of women to paid work under the slogan “equal pay for equal work.” Once again, feminist concerns depended heavily on their national contexts, that is, on the economic and political situation in each country. Although the Scandinavian countries are often quoted as the model to follow for many feminists, it is nonetheless true that priorities cannot be the same for Western feminisms as they are for those in China, the former Soviet Union, Latin America, Africa, and eastern Europe.

Abortion was a central concern of second wave feminisms worldwide, and it remains a much debated topic. Legislation varied a great deal, from countries in which abortions were banned (e.g., Ireland) to countries where it has been legal for more than three decades (the case *Roe v. Wade* in 1973 resulted in the legalization of abortion in all 50 states of the United States). In the 21st century, abortion remains an issue that is at the heart of feminists’ claims. The importance of the churches is fundamental to explaining the reasons of those who are opposed to abortion. It shows the reluctance to legislate in a sphere still considered private despite the fact that second wave feminists have argued “the personal is political.” Tough debates continued to take place in many countries. In

Europe, after referendums in 1998 and 2007, Portugal legalized abortion, and after the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, the right to abortion was also much debated in Germany and in the countries of eastern Europe.

The influence of religion remains strong in many of the recent debates, for example, the debates on the Muslim *burqa* in Belgium and France, where laws for its prohibition on grounds of defending secularism went into effect in 2011. The question of the *foulard* (veil) was discussed in France, and different opinions emerged among feminists. In 2004 a law was promulgated in France forbidding “the wearing in schools, colleges and public universities of symbols or clothing denoting religious affiliation.”

In 2011, following the case of the alleged sexual assault of a New York hotel worker by French politician and economist Dominique Strauss-Kahn, a worldwide discussion was raised in the press on sexual harassment and on the differences between French and American feminisms, a discussion in which prominent feminists from both sides of the Atlantic took part. This debate illustrates the necessity to go beyond the equality/difference dichotomy.

The last decades of the 20th century saw the emergence of transnational activities among feminists that were similar to these undertaken by first wave feminists at the end of the 19th century. If the priorities of the first and second wave feminisms are different and dependent on many variables, there has also been a continuity in its critical range and in its attempts to improve the situation of women throughout the world.

Anne Cova

*See also* Abortion; Family Policies; Gender Identity; Global Studies; Current Academic Approaches to; Human Rights, International; Identities in Global Societies; Modernization; Solidarity Movements; Women’s Movement; Women’s Rights

### Further Readings

- Allen, A. T., Cova, A., & Purvis, J. (Eds.). (2010). International feminisms [Special issue]. *Women’s History Review*, 19(4).
- Alvarez, S., Lebon, N., & Maier, E. (Eds.). (2010). *Women’s activism in Latin America and the Caribbean: Engendering social justice, democratizing citizenship*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.



- Anderson, B. S., & Zinsser, J. P. (2000). *A history of their own: Women in Europe from prehistory to the present* (Vols. 1 & 2). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Banaszak, L. A. (Ed.). (2006). *The U.S. women's movement in global perspective*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Cova, A. (Ed.). (2006). *Comparative women's history: New approaches*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Cova, A. (2011). *Féminismes et néo-malthusianismes sous la III<sup>e</sup> République: "La liberté de la maternité"* [Feminisms and neo-Malthusianisms in the Third Republic: "The liberty of maternity"]. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Delap, L. (2007). *The feminist avant-garde: Transatlantic encounters of the early twentieth century*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Fauré, C. (Ed.). (2003). *Political and historical encyclopedia of women*. New York: Routledge.
- Ferree, M. M., & Tripp, A. M. (Eds.). (2006). *Global feminism, transnational women's activism, organizing, and human rights*. New York: New York University Press.
- Hewitt, N. (Ed.). (2010). *No permanent waves: Recasting histories of U.S. feminism*. Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Moghadam, V. M. (2009). *Globalization and social movements: Islamism, feminism, and the global justice movement*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Offen, K. (2000). *European feminisms, 1700–1950: A political history*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Offen, K. (Ed.). (2010). *Globalizing feminisms, 1789–1945*. New York: Routledge.
- Scott, J. W., Kaplan, C., & Keates, D. (Eds.). (1997). *Transitions, environments, translations: Feminisms in international politics*. New York: Routledge.
- Smith, B. G. (Ed.). (2000). *Global feminisms since 1945*. New York: Routledge.
- Smith, B. G. (Ed.). (2004–2005). *Women's history in global perspective* (3 vols.). Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press.
- Smith, B. G. (Ed.). (2008). *The Oxford encyclopedia of women in world history* (4 vols.). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

---

## FERTILITY

---

By the end of the 20th century, fertility and mortality rates had declined significantly in both developed and developing countries, a pattern known

as demographic transition. There are many competing theories to explain demographic transition by linking it with variations in the opportunity costs of fertility. One body of literature explains demographic transition as a consequence of technological change and increased education. Scholars argue that technological progress provided households with more resources, which increased fertility in the early stages of the transition (Becker & Lewis, 1973; Becker, Murphy, & Tamura, 1990; Galor & Weil, 2000; Hansen & Prescott, 2002). However, eventually due to higher returns from human capital investment, households were able to reallocate these increased resources toward quality of child rearing rather than quantity of children, and thus fertility declined.

Another group of economists attributes the decline in fertility to the rise in income per capita. Alternatively, some researchers emphasize the role of the decline in the gender wage gap. Central to both theories is the assumption that the positive effect on fertility brought about by the rise in wages was overcome by the negative effect caused by the rising costs of raising children. If an increase in female wages is not sufficient to induce a significant increase in female labor force participation, fertility increases in response to higher household income. For a decline in fertility to occur, the relative wages of women with respect to the wages of men need to sufficiently increase to dominate the income effect.

Another favored theory suggests that fertility decline is triggered by mortality decline. Zvi Eckstein, Pedro Mira, and Kenneth I. Wolpin show that reduction in child mortality is the most important factor explaining the fertility decline in Sweden, whereas increases in real wages can explain less than one third of the fertility decline. Parents are less concerned about the survival of their children given the reduction in infant and child mortality, thus decreasing fertility. Although this argument explains a significant portion of the reduction in fertility, it cannot explain the realized reduction in the net rate of reproduction and population growth around the world. This inconsistency between the existing models and data can be resolved if an uncertainty about the number of children that will survive is introduced into the model. In a high mortality environment, parents increase the number of births as a precautionary measure, which may lead to a more than desired number of children and a higher net